

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 05681 050541 Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 OMB-01 DPW-01 IO-12 EUR-25

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 INRE-00 RSR-01 /141 W
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P R 050443 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9667

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5681

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR APR. 4, 1973

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM CAN THO 4 APR 73
REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/ DEPT AND INFOR/ PARIS

QUOTE

CAN THO 0123

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINT, VS, CA, HU, ID, PLS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR APRIL 4, 1973

1. SUMMARY: OVERALL MILITARY ACTIVITY DROPPED BUT THERE WERE INCREASED GROUND ATTACKS IN KIEN PHONG AND DINH TUONG. THE VC/ NVA HAVE MASSED A CONSIDERABLE CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS IN THE HONG NGU AREA. THE CANADIANS HAVE PRODUCED A LIST OF POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELAYING TACTICS. NEW VC PROPAGANDA AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION TECHNIQUES ARE APPEARING IN VINH BINH. THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE FOR A LARGE- SCALE OFFENSIVE IN KIEN HOA. END SUMMARY

2. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) VC/ VNA INITIATED ACTIVITY DROPPED IN NUMBERS THROUGHOUT MOST OF MR IV ON APRIL 3 BUT INCREASED CONSIDERABLY IN INTENSITY. VC/ NVA INITIATED GROUND ATTACKS WERE ESPECIALLY SEVERE IN DINH TUONG AND THE HONG NGU AREA OF KIEN PHONG. DINH TUONG, WHICH HAD BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET LAST WEEK, SUFFERED GROUND ATTACKS AND LOST AN RF BATTALION COMMANDER. THE NUMBER OF TERRORIST

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 05681 050541 Z

INCIDENTS INCREASED. A CAMBODIAN MONK WAS KILLED IN BA XUYEN, REPORTEDLY ANGERING THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY. IN THE REMAINDER OF THE DELTA, HARRASSMENT WAS THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

(B). THE ARVN DISTRICT S-2 IN HONG NGU HAS REPORTED TO THE HONG NGU ICCS TEAM THAT, IN CAMBODIA AND PARTS OF HONG NGU DISTRICT, THE VC/ NVA HAVE 13 MAIN FORCE AND COMBAT SUPPORT BATTALIONS AND PERHAPS SOME ARMOR AS WELL. OPPOSING THESE FORCES THE GVN HAS THE 14 TH REGIMENT OF THE 9 TH ARVN DIVISION, 3 BATTALIONS OF RF AND 29 PLATOONS OF PF. THE KIEN PHONG PROVINCE CHIEF TOLD THE CONSUL GENERAL APRIL 4 THAT THE PRESENCE OF MORE ARVN UNITS WOULD BE IMPERATIVE FOR THE DEFENSE OF HONG NGU. HE ADDED THAT THE TWO PARTY ICCS TEAM ON HAND AT HONG NGU WAS WILLING TO WORK, BUT NOTED THAT ITS MISSION WAS ENTRY POINT CONTROL RATHER THAN CONVENTIONAL TRUCE SUPERVISION. THE ICCS REMAINS IN PLACE AND CONTINUES TO SEND HOURLY SITREPS TO REGION VI HEADQUARTERS.

3. ICCS: (A) REGION VII ICCS REQUESTED 15 GVN INVESTIGATION REQUESTS ON APRIL 3. POOR SECURITY WAS THE REASON FOR MOST OF THE REFUSALS. THE SUB- REGIONAL ICCS TEAMS, WHICH HAVE AUTHORITY TO DECIDE WHETHER SECURITY PERMITS AN INVESTIGATION, HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO INVESTIGATE ATTACKS ON OUTPOSTS IN CONTESTED AREAS SINCE THE US JMC ELEMENT DEPARTED.

(B). THE CONSUL GENERAL APRIL 3 LEFT A TALKING PAPER WITH BRIG. GEN. NGUYEN THANH HOANG, DEPUTY MR IV COMMANDER. THE PAPER DEALT WITH WAYS THE GVN COULD IMPROVE ITS SUBMISSION OF INVESTIGATION REQUESTS TO THE ICCS.

(C). THE CANADIANS HAVE RECORDED THE FOLLOWING DIFFERENT POLISH AND HUNGARIAN OBSTRUCTIVE TACTICS USED TO HINDER ICCS INVESTIGATIONS OF GVN SUBMITTED COMPLAINTS: (1). LENGTHY DELAY FOR TRANSLATION OF BRIEF DOCUMENTS; (2). SAIGON OR REGION AUTHORIZATION OF AN INVESTIGATION BUT STALLING AT THE NEXT LOWER ECHELON; (3) DELAY BECAUSE OF " NEED" TO CONSULT WITH HIGHER HEAD-QUARTERS; (4) TEDIOUS DISCUSSION OF TRIVIAL MATTERS; (5) REFUSAL TO INTERVIEW WITNESSES AT ANY LOCATION OTHER THAN THE SITE OF THE VIOLATION; (6) INACTIVITY DURING PERIOD OF CHAIRMANSHIP; (7) DELAY IN TABLING GVN INVESTIGATION REQUESTS AND THEN REJECTING THEM ON GROUNDS OF TARDINESS; (8) REFUSAL TO ACCEPT AS EVIDENCE PHOTOS TAKEN BEFORE REGION OFFICIALLY AUTHORIZED THE INVESTIGATION. IN RESPONSE TO THESE TACTICS, CANADA HAS INSTRUCTED REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS TO PRESS FOR REVIEW OF ALL OUTSTANDING REQUESTS FOR INVESTIGATIONS.

(D). GENERAL MCALPINE, SENIOR CANADIAN MILITARY ADVISOR, IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT REGION VII APRIL 5. HE EXPECTS TO CALL ON
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PAGE 03 SAIGON 05681 050541 Z

MR IV COMMANDER, MGEN NGUYEN VINH NGHI. GEN. MCALPINE WILL VISIT THE TRI TON ICCS TEAM AND PERHAPS ONE OR TWO OTHERS IF TIME PERMITS.

4. COMMUNIST ACTIVITY: (A) A PLASTIC CHARGE EXPLODED IN THE CAU MAU POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT 0930 APRIL 3 INJURING ONE WOMAN. THE INCIDENT IS NOTEWORTHY BECAUSE THE POST OFFICE IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 20 METERS FROM THE QUARTERS OF THE VICE CONSUL WHO WAS WORKING THERE AT THE TIME. HE SUFFERED ONLY MINOR FRIGHT.

(B). THE VC IN VINH BINH ARE REPORTEDLY ORGANIZING RECONCILIATION COMMITTEES (UY BAN HOA GIAI). THE COMMITTEES APPEAR TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO GATHER BROAD POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNIST POSITION IN THE PARIS NEGOTIATIONS AND WERE TERMED BY ONE PROVINCE OFFICIAL AS THE VC EQUIVALENT OF THE POPULAR FRONT.

5. GVN ACTIVITIES: PRIME MINISTER KHIEM AND CAO VAN THAN PRESIDED OVER THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE FARMERS' FAIR IN CAN THO APRIL 4. WHILE THEIR SPEECHES WERE NON- POLITICAL AND MERCIFULLY SHORT, THEIR PRESENCE WAS A POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR INTEREST IN THE MAJORITY SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION.

6. SELECTED PROVINCE COMMENTS: (A) THE VICE CONSUL IN KIEN HOA COMMENTS THAT VIETNAMESE OPINION THERE IS MIXED OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF A VC GENERAL OFFENSIVE IN THE AREA. SPECULATION RANGES FROM ATTACKS ON SOME DISTRICT TOWNS (OR EVEN BEN TRE) TO ATTACKS ON VULNERABLE OUTPOSTS TO AN INCREASE IN HARRASSMENT, INCLUDING ROCKET ATTACKS. THE VICE CONSUL FEELS THAT, GIVEN THE WEAKNESS OF VC UNIT

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON05681
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730434/aaaahrbo.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 15 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <24-Oct-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971201
Subject: SITREP FOR APR. 4, 1973 THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FRON CAN THO 4 APR 73 REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/ DEPT AND INFOR/ PARIS QUOTE CAN THO 0123 E. O. 116 52: GDS TAGS: MILI, PINT, VS, CA, HU, ID, PLS SUBJCSITREP FOR APR. 4, 1973 THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FRON
TAGS: MILI, PINS, VS, MILI, PINT
To: EA
JEC PARIS
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

